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FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6996  
INFO RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 0554  
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA PRIORITY 0466  
RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD PRIORITY 7455  
RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU PRIORITY 5600  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 4072  
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY 1464  
RUEHNY/AMEMBASSY OSLO PRIORITY 4122  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 3211  
RUEHCG/AMCONSUL CHENNAI PRIORITY 8054  
RUEHBI/AMCONSUL MUMBAI PRIORITY 5666  
RUEHON/AMCONSUL TORONTO PRIORITY 0422  
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY 2381  
RHHMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY  
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RHEHAAA/NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY  
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS PRIORITY  
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION PRIORITY

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DEPARTMENT FOR SCA/INS  
MCC FOR D NASSIRY AND E BURKE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/13/2017  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [MOPS](#) [CE](#)  
SUBJECT: SRI LANKA: TIGERS STAGE A RAID DEEP IN THE  
SINHALESE SOUTH

Classified By: Ambassador Robert O Blake, for reasons 1.4(b,d).

¶1. (SBU) On October 15, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) attacked a Sri Lanka Army (SLA) base in Yala National Sanctuary, located deep in the predominantly Sinhalese portion of the South. Tamilnet, a pro-LTTE web site, reported that Tigers took a cache of weapons and set the camp ablaze. The Tigers claimed to have killed six SLA soldiers and controlled the camp for approximately three hours before voluntarily retreating. SLA military spokesman Brigadier Udaya Nanayakkara, however, says the Army repelled the attack, killing at least seven Tiger cadres. Nanayakkara said that the military intercepted a Tiger communication relaying that more than 20 LTTE cadres had been killed in the raid. He confirmed, however, that six SLA soldiers had been killed in the "ambush," and said that one soldier was wounded. Nanayakkara made no mention of whether the LTTE ever controlled the "outpost" or recovered any weapons in the raid. The following morning, a tractor driven by SLA soldiers in Thalgasmankada near Yala was destroyed when it hit a pressure mine while carrying SLA dead bodies collected from the previous day's fight. Nanayakkara reported that one soldier was killed by the mine and three others were injured.

¶3. (C) Intense fighting has raged in several other hot-spots in the North, including Vavuniya, Mannar and at the base of the Jaffna peninsula, close to the Forward Defense Line (FDL) which separates the SLA from Tiger-controlled territory. Fighting began on October 14 shortly after UN High Commissioner for Refugees Louise Arbours left Jaffna. Both the SLA and the LTTE have categorized the fighting as defensive and both have likely exaggerated their opponent's losses while minimizing their own.

¶4. (C) COMMENT: All indications are that the LTTE continues to suffer significant setbacks resulting from the current fighting in the North. However, the LTTE's strike on

a target deep in the heart of Sinhalese territory and far away from their own home base serves as a reminder that the LTTE can and does continue to operate throughout the country.

The Tiger's return to the use of land mines, the first such incident reported in more than a year, is also deeply troubling.

BLAKE